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UNCLAS GUATEMALA 000044

SIPDIS

STATE FOR MADELYN SPIRNAK
USDA FOR KITTY CARDWELL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ECON](#) [EAGR](#) [ETRD](#) [TBIO](#) [SENV](#) [TSPL](#) [GT](#)

SUBJECT: RESULTS OF SENIOR SCIENCE ADVISOR AND SCIENCE
FELLOW VISIT ON BIOTECH ISSUES.

REF: 05 GUATEMALA 2342

1. As per reftel, the visit of Senior Science Advisor Madelyn Spirnak and work of Embassy Science Fellow Kitty Cardwell on educating the GOG and the local scientific community on biotechnology use in agriculture were very productive. One positive result was that biotechnology legislation that lacked broad scientific input and had the potential to be problematic for trade and research has been put on hold for further investigation.

2. After a Congressional review of the proposed biotech law, it was felt that too many changes were needed to simply amend the document. Congress instead plans to re-write the entire piece of legislation in its 2006 session. Some feel that a complete re-write will open the door to special interest groups that oppose biotechnology to try and defeat the bill. However, others are assured that the scientific community that supports biotechnology is now better equipped to defend its benefits and write a better legislative proposal.

Derham